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*TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 23, 2009*

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 5214, An Act Concerning Posting Legal Notices on the Web Site of a Municipality.

This proposal authorizes towns to place legal notices of bids and ordinance changes on town websites rather than in local daily or weekly newspapers. Many state laws and local charters require publication in a locally distributed newspaper. House Bill 5214 construes these requirements to include posting on the town website.

While I understand concerns about costs of notice in local newspapers, I urge the committee to consider that many members of our communities may lack access to the Internet. Newspaper publication provides an independent and permanent verification, while website postings may be altered or deleted.

Newspaper publication continues to serve a robust, reliable role in discriminating information that unites and empowers individual members of our community. It should not be abandoned as a requirement for proper notice. I urge that this legislative proposal be revisited and reworked.

In an effort to reduce municipal costs, the committee may wish to consider variations or combinations of website postings and newspaper publication that serve the public interest.

Thank you.